

MEANEST MAN OF ALL.

He Actually Starved His Wife and Children.

While He Made a Perfect Glutton of Himself.

She was a pale, quiet, old woman who did nothing for a living, says the Chicago Tribune. One day she was pale than usual and her hands trembled. Her mistress asked her the reason. She said: "I been thinkin' of a lady I helped to nurse once—in Colorado 'twas. She was took bad sudden an' they sent for me. The house was only kind of roofed in, an' the rainy season was on, an' the net tubs to catch the water, else it would have dripped on her. I'd been tell about her before I went there, an' about him, too."

"She was used to things like back east. Her folks had warned her not to marry him. When she did, an' found out her foolishness, she was too proud to make money. He was a man of means, but stingy. Great Jerusalem! child, the good Lord couldn't never ha' made him. He hadn't the print of decent fingers on him!"

"Get a doctor!" says I, seem' how bad she was.

"No," he answers cool, 'it's a useless expense. I've got a book here I'll do."

"Bimby the hired girl came to the door."

"What for dinner, sir?" she asked.

"Graham bread and potato bakes," he said.

"But the children wants to know if they can have a bit of ham. There's two loaves in the cellar."

"By no means. Meat is not hygienic for children. But you kin cook one slice—just one thick slice—fur me."

"I say, 'bimby, I thought you'd be the best. Kin I have a cup of tea?"

"Certainly not," he replies prompt.

"Wouldn't you heart?"

"No, indeed. In your nervous condition, I am surprised, indeed."

"Everything was the same way. There wasn't nothing to think about. I'd been her but crackers an' water. The children couldn't have but one helpin' at meals. That wasn't a big one. But his plate was piled with a lot of food."

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PICKED UP HERE AND THERE.

Photographs of Daily Life All Over the Country.

Better to Have His Finger Cut Off Than to Predict Wrongly.

Farmer Jenks is a man who is so desirous of being considered infallible that he will suffer great inconvenience rather than relinquish that claim, says the *Chicago Tribune*. "He's rather haughty, his own way than when he's hungry," says his wife, who, after long years of contention and final yielding, has learned to know him well.

Not long ago Farmer Jenks injured one of his fingers so severely that he was obliged to leave his work and go home to have it dressed.

"I tell you that, Jane," he said to his wife, "that finger'll have to come off."

"No, 'twon't either, father," said she soothingly.

"I tell you, Jane, I don't want to lose it. I'll tell you what to expect of my own finger?"

"The dispute ran high, and, as usual, the husband won the last word."

Days went on and the finger grew worse rather than better, until at last it reached such a state that the doctor was called.

"I had not been in the room fifteen minutes when Farmer Jenks summoned his wife."

"Jane," said he, "come here; come right here. What do you 'pose he says?"

"Well, I guess by the way you're smiling he says it's all right," said she, also beginning to smile in relief.

"I guess I can get it off," said he, and on the next day it was removed.

"But that's just it," interrupted her husband, still smiling in triumph and looking at her with sparkling eyes. "It's got to come off, and I told you so!"

"What a POPE HAS DONE.

Innocent III. Has a Record That Will Go Down to Many Generations.

Innocent III., whose new tomb was unveiled in the Basilica of St. John Lateran on Dec. 27, was one of the most remarkable of the successors of St. Peter.

He was born in the town of Soanen, in the house of Conti (the counts of Soanen), he was only thirty-seven, and member of the minor orders when the assembled cardinals, on the death of Celestine III., in January, 1198, pressed the Papal dignity upon him.

He was then known as Lothar, Cardinal of SS. Sergius and Iaculus, having been raised to a place in the sacred college in his twenty-seventh year, while still a sub-deacon. He had employed his leisure in the composition of treatises—on the nature of the Pope, on the nature of the church, on the death of Celestine III., in January, 1198, pressed the Papal dignity upon him.

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who was playing in hard rock, tried to "shake me" by using a long claim of \$25 against me, alleging that I had borrowed that amount from him. I told no attention to the matter, and it was dropped.

"The other day my grandmother died and I went to Indiana to attend her funeral. I went down to the Polk street hotel just before bedtime. I was surprised to come face to face with my old flopper partner. Accompanying him was a constable, who called me aside and remarked: 'I have a capias for you.'"

"What's the charge?"

"This man claims you owe him \$25 and has sworn out a warrant for your arrest."

"The claim was bogus and long since outlawed. The train was ready to pull out. Not a moment was to be lost. I had not time to get into my coat. I slipped and fell into the street. I fought and missed the funeral. I threw up my hands."

"How much is the entire claim, costs and all?" I asked.

"Twenty-nine dollars."

"I handed the amount over instantly, and, while he was writing a receipt, gave him my check concerning blackmail, as fine art, I caught the train without a second to spare. But I haven't caught the blackmailier yet. Perhaps I'll meet him again some time."

CONGREGATION OF CROWS.

Along the Mississippi River Thousands of Them Get Together.

It seems as if all the crows in the country were now congregated on the Mississippi river, writes a correspondent.

Every Winter after the first heavy snowfalls crows from all the surrounding country come to the river in search of food.

Thousands of them may be seen between the city and Jefferson Barracks along the banks, perched on floating masses of ice, and all busily engaged in discussing the offal and refuse which is thrown from the dump into the river.

It is surprising from what distances they come, for it is known that crows roost eighty miles from the river and do not leave before daybreak, the crows leaving for the Mississippi when they return by nightfall to take up their quarters.

One hundred and sixty miles is a long distance to travel for a dinner, but the crows have plenty of time, since they do not seem to mind it, and when the fields are covered with snow and other food is difficult to find they travel by nightfall to take up their quarters.

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